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ABSTRACT

During the spring semester, 1982, a study was conducted at Queensborough Community College (QCC) to determine the characteristics, course preferences, and academic performance of non-degree students, that is, the 18% (N=2,133) of the total student body (N=11,800) without a declared curriculum. The study showed that the mean age of the non-degree student was 28 years, with the largest group (43%) falling in the 26 to 30 age category. Slightly more than half were women, and about 37% were married. About 15% of the non-degree students were enrolled full-time, i.e., taking 12 or more credits. Most courses taken by the non-degree students were in business (28.2%), with physical education and social sciences the next most popular course categories. Remedial courses in English and/or mathematics represented about 8% of the courses taken by non-degree students. Approximately 60% of the students had previously attended QCC, and more than 50% of the group had satisfactorily completed 5 to 29 credits, with 9 being the median number of credits completed successfully. About 3% of the non-degree students had earned associate degrees from QCC in previous years. Of the students who had previously attended QCC, more than 50% had earned a cumulative grade point average of "B" or better. (KL)

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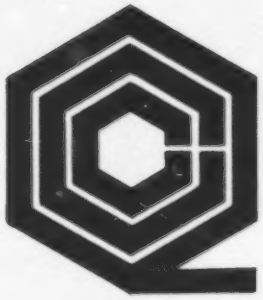
A PROFILE OF NON-DEGREE STUDENTS AT QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE SPRING 1982



OFFICE OF TESTING & INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
BAYSIDE, NEW YORK 11364
1982

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BAYSIDE, NEW YORK 11364
MAY, 1982

HIGHLIGHTS

- Non-degree students constitute about one-fifth of the student body.
- More than half live in the Bayside area.
- Slightly more than half are women.
- The median age of all non-degree students is 28.
- About three-eighths are married.
- More than four-fifths are taking fewer than 12 credits.
- More than fifteen percent are taking 12 or more credits.
- The most popular courses are in the Business, Physical Education and Social Science departments (in that order).
- About 60 percent attended QCC in prior semesters; More than half satisfactorily completed 5 to 20 credits (Median=9).
- About 3 percent of all non-degree students previously earned a degree at QCC.
- More than half who were previously in attendance, earned a GPA of 'B' or better.

QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

OFFICE OF TESTING AND INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

A PROFILE OF NON-DEGREE STUDENTS AT QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE: SPRING 1982

Each semester large numbers of students without declared curricula enroll at Queensborough Community College. Little is known about this group of students. The purpose of this study is to ascertain the demographic characteristics, course preferences and academic performance of non-degree students currently enrolled at Queensborough Community College, and to record base-line data for future comparisons.

During the Spring 1982 semester, 2133 non-degree students (18 percent) were enrolled out of approximately 11,800 students. Numbers of non-degree students in previous semesters (1977-1981) ranged from approximately 1300 (12 percent) in Spring 1978 to 2200 (18 percent) in Fall 1981. (See Appendix A). The 2133 non-degree students were enrolled in 4511 courses yielding approximately two courses on the average per student.

All non-degree students in this study were enrolled and in attendance at the College after the third week of the semester.

RESIDENCE:

Table I presents a breakdown of non-degree student residences by borough and county.

TABLE I

RESIDENCE BY BOROUGH AND COUNTY OF NON-DEGREE STUDENTS
(N=2133)

Borough or County	Zip	N	Percent
Bronx	104	42	2.0
Brooklyn	112	47	2.2
Manhattan	100	17	<1
Staten Island	103	2	<1
L.I.C.	111	55	2.6
Bayside	113	1214	56.9
Jamaica	114	553	25.9
Rockaway	116	34	1.6
Queens Total		1856	87.0
Floral Pk/Elmont	110	107	5.0
Hempstead	115	34	1.6
Nassau Total		141	6.6
Suffolk	117	24	1.1
Westchester	105	2	<1
Yonkers	107	2	<1
TOTAL		2133	100

Table I indicates that 87 percent of the non-degree students reside in Queens and that 1214 (over 65 percent) of Queens residents come from the Bayside area.

In an overall analysis of the permanent residence of non-degree students, 91.7 percent (N=1957) are New York City residents, 7.9 percent (N=169) reside in New York State but not in New York City and less than one percent (N=7) have permanent residences in a foreign country.

SEX:

More than half of the non-degree students are female (56 percent; N=1209).

MARITAL STATUS:

Married students constitute about 37 percent of the non-degree students.

AGE:

Table 2 shows the ages of non-degree students by age groups.

TABLE 2

AGE OF NON-DEGREE STUDENTS: SPRING 1982

AGE CATEGORY	N	PERCENT
Less than 20	21	<1
20-25	324	15.2
26-30	911	42.7
31-40	420	19.7
41-50	230	10.8
51-60	149	7.0
61-70	60	2.8
71-80	18	<1
Total	2133	100%

It is apparent from Table 2 that the largest group of non-degree students falls in the 26-30 age category. The median age of students is 28.

FULL-TIME/PART-TIME STATUS

More than four-fifths of the non-degree students (N=1802; 84.5 percent) are part-time students taking less than 12 credits and/or remedial hours. As many as 331 non-degree students (15.5 percent) are carrying 12 or more credits and/or remedial hours.

COURSE SELECTION

A departmental breakdown of courses taken by the 2133 non-degree students is shown in Table 3.

The data in Table 3 indicate that four departments, the Business (28.2 percent), Health, Physical Education & Dance (11.1 percent), Social Science (10.4 percent) and Mathematics Departments (7.9 percent) have the highest number of courses taken by non-degree students and account for more than half of the courses taken (57.6 percent). Six departments, the English (6.1 percent) Biology (6.0 percent) Basic Skills (5.3 percent) Chemistry (3.4 percent) Foreign Languages (3.3 percent) and Electrical Technology (3.2 percent)departments follow with diminishing percentages and account for an additional 27.3 percent of the courses taken.

The top ten department ranks cited above account for more than 80 percent of all courses taken.

TABLE 3

NUMBER OF COURSES BY DEPARTMENT SELECTED BY NON-DEGREE STUDENTS: SPRING 1982

DEPARTMENT	RANK	NO. OF COURSES	PERCENT
Business	1	1273	28.2
Health, Phys. Ed. & Dance	2	500	11.1
Social Sciences	3	469	10.4
Mathematics	4	355	7.9
English	5	276	6.1
Biological Sciences & Geology	6	270	6.0
Basic Educational Skills	7	237	5.3
Chemistry	8	153	3.4
Foreign Languages & Literatures	9	149	3.3
Electrical & Computer Technology	10	143	3.2
History	11	139	3.1
Music	12	121	2.7
Art & Design	13	113	2.5
Speech Communication &Theatre Arts	14	107	2.4
Physics	15	105	2.3
Mechanical Technology and Design Drafting	16	101	2.2
Nursing	*	*	*
TOTAL:		4511	100%

*Non-degree students are not eligible to take courses in the Nursing Department except for NU-100 (Community Health and Basic Home Nursing)

CREDIT COURSES:

Table 4 indicates the number of credit-bearing courses taken by non-degree students by the number of course credits attached to each course.

TABLE 4

NUMBER OF COURSES BY COURSE CREDIT TAKEN BY NON-DEGREE STUDENTS

No. OF CREDITS PER COURSE	No.OF COURSES	PERCENT OF TOTAL
1	352	7.8
2	471	10.4
3	2364	52.4
4	910	20.2
4.5	42	<1
non-credit	372	8.2
TOTAL	4511	100%

According to Table 4, more than half of the courses taken by non-degree students are three credit courses and about 20 percent are 4 credit courses.

Approximately 8 percent are one-credit courses with an equal percentage of non-credit (remedial) courses.

CREDITS SATISFACTORILY COMPLETED:

Table 5 shows the number of credits satisfactorily completed by non-degree students currently in attendance.

About 40 percent had zero credits. Within this group, 82 percent were admitted to QCC as new students. The remaining 18 percent were previously in attendance but did not satisfactorily complete credit courses and/or may have taken non-credit remedial courses.

Table 5 also shows that 60 percent (N=1264) of the non-degree students satisfactorily earned one or more credits.

Of these, about 45 percent satisfactorily earned 3 through 19 credits while other non-degree students accumulated 20 through 100 credits (27.7 percent).

TABLE 5

CREDITS SATISFACTORILY COMPLETED BY NON-DEGREE STUDENTS PRIOR TO SPRING 1982

CREDITS	N	Percent
0	857	40.4
1	13	<1
2	31	1.5
3	182	8.6
4	116	5.5
4-9	324	15.3
10-19	311	14.7
20-29	112	5.3
30-39	46	2.2
40-49	42	2.0
50-59	32	1.5
60-69	25	1.2
70-79	21	<1
80-89	7	<1
90-99	1	<1
100	1	<1
TOTAL	2121	100%

PREVIOUS DEGREES:

Seventy non-degree students currently enrolled earned an Associate Degree at QCC in prior years (AAS=48; AS=6; AA=16).

CUMULATIVE GPA

Table 6 presents data on the cumulative grade point average (GPA) of the non-degree students who were previously in attendance at QCC. This table shows that almost 10 percent have perfect grades (GPA=4.0) and that an additional 40 percent have a GPA of 'B' or higher.

TABLE 6

CUMULATIVE GRADE POINT AVERAGES OF NON-DEGREE STUDENTS IN ATTENDANCE DURING THE SPRING 1982 SEMESTER

GPA	N	PERCENT
*Less than 1	86	6.8
1 to 1.49	99	7.8
1.5-1.99	154	12.2
2-2.49	179	14.1
2.5-2.99	166	13.1
3-3.49	267	21.1
3.5-3.99	196	15.5
4.00	119	9.4
TOTAL	1266	100

*Greater than zero

CROSSTABULATION OF GPA AND CREDITS:

Table 7 crosstabulates GPA's with the number of credits satisfactorily completed by 1249 non-degree students. Students with missing GPA's and/or zero credits are not included. Looking at the GPA column totals, the highest percentage of students (21.3 percent) falls in the 3 to 3.49 GPA category followed by the 3.5 to 3.99 category with 15.7 percent.

Looking at the "Credits Satisfactorily Completed" row totals, the largest percentages occur in the 1 to 9 and 10 to 19 credit categories, with 53.2 and 24.7 percent respectively.

Looking within the table, the largest percentages in the 1 to 9 credit row occur in the 3 to 3.49, and 3.5 to 3.49 and 4.0 GPA categories, with 13.0, 8.9 and 8.8 percent respectively.

In the 10 to 19 credit category, the 3 to 3.49 and 3.5 to 3.99 GPA's exhibit the highest percentages (5.[illegible] and 5.4 percent respectively).

ACADEMIC DISMISSAL AND PROBATION:

Among the non-degree students who did not previously graduate from QCC, there are 33 who were either dismissed from QCC for academic reasons or placed on academic probation (Academic dismissal; N=20; Academic Probation: N=11; Conditional Probation; N=2)

TABLE 7

STUDENT GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)
By Number of Credits Satisfactorily Completed

No. of Credits Satisfactorly Completed	G.P.A. .1-.99	1-1.49	1.5-1.99	2-2.49	2.5-2.99	3-3.49	3.5-3.99	4.00	TOTAL
1-9	55 (4.4)	34 (2.7)	50 (4.0)	72 (5.8)	70 (5.6)	162 (13.0)	111 (8.9)	110 (8.8)	664 (53.2)
10-19	13 (1.0)	17 (1.4)	32 (2.6)	48 (3.8)	53 (4.2)	70 (5.6)	68 (5.4)	8 (0.6)	309 (24.7)
20-29	1 (0.1)	19 (1.5)	17 (1.4)	23 (1.8)	26 (2.1)	18 (1.4)	7 (0.6)	1 (0.1)	112 (9.0)
30-39	1 (0.1)	13 (1.0)	8 (0.6)	10 (0.8)	8 (0.6)	3 (0.2)	3 (0.2)	0 (0)	46 (3.7)
40-49	3 (0.2)	8 (0.6)	10 (0.8)	7 (0.6)	2 (0.2)	7 (0.6)	2 (0.2)	0 (0)	39 (3.1)
50-59	1 (0.1)	4 (0.3)	13 (1.0)	9 (0.7)	3 (0.2)	0 (0)	2 (0.2)	0 (0)	32 (2.6)
60-69	0 (0)	3 (0.2)	7 (0.6)	3 (0.2)	3 (0.2)	5 (0.4)	1 (0.1)	0 (0)	22 (1.8)
70-79	0 (0)	1 (0.1)	10 (0.8)	3 (0.2)	0 (0)	1 (0.1)	2 (0.2)	0 (0)	17 (1.4)
80-89	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (0.3)	1 (0.1)	2 (0.2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	7 (0.6)
90-99	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
100 or more	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.1)
TOTAL	74 (5.9)	99 (7.9)	152 (12.2)	176 (14.1)	167 (13.4)	266 (21.3)	196 (15.7)	119 (9.5)	1249 (100.0)

SUMMARY:

The non-degree students at QCC in the current semester (Spring 1982) constitute about one-fifth of the student body and reside primarily in the Bayside area. The median age of non-degree students is 28. Most of the students fall in the 26-30 age category (43 percent) followed by the 31-40 age category (20 percent). Slightly more than half are women. About three-eights of the students reported that they are married.

About 85 percent are part-time students while 15 percent are considered full-time taking 12 or more credits.

Most courses taken by non-degree students are in the Business department (28.2 percent). Physical Education and Social Science courses are the next most popular categories selected by non-degree students (11.1 and 10.4 percent respectively).

Almost 75 percent of the courses taken by non-degree students are 3 or 4 credit courses.

Remedial courses in English and/or mathematics represent about 8 percent of all courses taken by non-degree students.

Approximately 60 percent of the non-degree students previously attended QCC; more then half of this group satisfactorily completed 5 to 29 credits. With a median of 9 credits satisfactorily completed, about one-half of the students completed less than 9 credits and the other half, more than 9. About 3 percent earned Associate degrees at QCC in prior years.

More than half of the non-degree students who were previously in attendance, earned a cumulative GPA of 'B' or better.

Discussion

With 60 percent of the currently enrolled non-degree students in attendance at QCC for at least two semesters, an internal recruitment program may be worthwhile for this group; Academic advisement and career couseling may encourage matriculation among these students, especially those who have exhibited superior academic performance.

If such a program were inaugurated, it may be prudent to initially work with those students who have attained 'B' or 'A' averages with 10 or more credits.

FUTURE STUDIES:

A longitudinal study of non-degree students should be conducted to follow this cohort and to show:

1: Academic Persistence: number of semesters in attendance.

2: Academic Outcome: Matriculation; graduation; or no longer in attendance.

APPENDIX A

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGES OF NON-DEGREE STUDENTS BY SEMESTER:*

1977 to 1982

SEMESTER	N	PERCENT OF TOTAL ENROLLMENT	TOTAL ENROLLMENT
Fall 1977	2375	19.3	12322
Spring 1978	1323	12.7	10387
Fall 1978	1546	13.3	11598
Spring 1979	1345	12.5	10802
Fall 1979	1765	15.0	11793
Spring 1980	1678	14.9	11287
Fall 1980	1963	16.6	11813
Spring 1981	1839	16.3	11257
Fall 1981	2191	18.2	12066
Spring 1982	2133	18.0	11848

*Data extracted from Registrar's Form A, BHE Report.

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